



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

“Don’t wait for the perfect **MOMENT,
Take the **MOMENT** and make it
PERFECT.”**

- Zoey Sayward

**WE HAVE
IT ALL
HERE**



**Monumental Moments ... 7th Edition
GARDEN CITY FAMILY YMCA
2015**

Acknowledgments



The Monumental Moment book highlights the stories and impact we have on the community each year. Every week in staff meetings, the Management Staff nominate stories that pull your heart strings. Each chapter is represented by each month and the story who gets the top votes is the winner for that week. The other stories submitted are not forgotten and Chapter 13 represents all those stories. A big THANKS goes out to everyone involved. Whether it was a staff person, volunteer, member or program participant, we transformed lives and made a difference. Usually, you just hear all the negative day in and day out, this book is all positive and wouldn't be published without the support of all the following people:

All YMCA staff

All YMCA Members

All Program Participants

All the YMCA Volunteers

All the YMCA Donors, Supporters and other special friends!

Thank you to all the staff. This book would not be possible without your work. The staff helped create these relationships, striving for our three focus areas and putting our mission into action. Keep up the good work!



Focus Areas:

For Youth Development, Healthy Living and Social Responsibility

Our Mission:

“To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.”

Our Motto:

“Where Values Meets Value”

In Dedication to Larry Myers

This year embarked a GREAT list of special friends of the YMCA. I have always said we have the best community and support for our YMCA. That is what makes the YMCA a special place for so many people in this community. Our Management Team nominated six names eight names this year for the book. It was a tough decision for many to vote.

Some of our team are very new to the YMCA and don't know about our rich heritage.

But, most of the staff did know Larry Myers and what he meant to the YMCA. Larry joined our YMCA in and was and has constantly been using our facilities in many ways. Larry was an avid racquetball player and loved playing cut throat with two of his friends; Vic Freeman and Leroy Cabbage. He also encountered a few matches with Terry Darden and his gang on Tuesday and Thursday. All of them have a Larry Myers story to tell you and they each have their own unique shot for Larry. They even have points to honor

Larry to this day! I think one is between the legs kill shot for four points. Larry was instrumental in replacing our doors for the RB courts and adding the plexi-glass in the mezzanine. Larry loved his weightlifting as well. He was always in the weight room doing his workout. He would always alert us to any problems or stuff that needed attention.

Larry loved the sauna in the men's locker room. A week before he was admitted to the hospital, he was talking to me about changing the configuration of the sauna and helping to purchase a new unit. He said this one doesn't work very well and needs changed. He was right, the unit was on its last leg and we replaced the sauna equipment while he was in Wichita. In fact, when I first seen Dane when he returned, I took Dane into the locker room to show him that his Dad is up in heaven gleaming at our new sauna. Larry would

have LOVED it!! Please help us by honoring Larry Myers for our 2015 Monumental Moment book dedication. Larry was a true Ambassador for our YMCA and would help us in many projects and fundraisers or whatever the YMCA needed.

THANKS Larry!



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The best things in life are not things, they are moments

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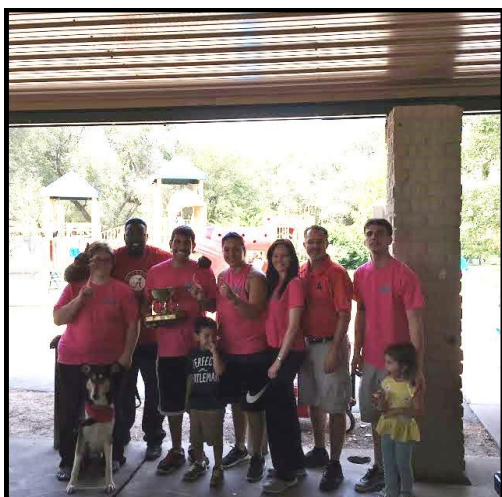
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Honorable Mention Stories



January 6

Golden Membership

Crystal Ibarra

As I'm sitting in my office working on memberships, JD walks in and says "What's this I hear I'm old now and get a free membership?" We both laughed as he joked. I did explain to him about our new Golden Memberships. Anyone 80 and older will now receive a lifetime membership. He thanked our YMCA for being such a great place to be and said "Well glad I'm old now" Thank you JD we love to see you in our water aerobics classes and enjoying your time here.

January 13

The Little Things

Krystal Richardson

I am so blessed to work in a position where relationships are built daily between our kiddos and parents! It is not the easiest job, but it is very rewarding and wouldn't trade that for anything. I have been blessed to build a great relationship with a parent and her child since taking over childcare in 2013. We have had our ups and downs, but ALWAYS manage to find a common ground. There was a misunderstanding on how our Holiday and Spring Break camps are paid and how much the cost is weekly. I sent her an email and let her know how it worked and that we would NOT charge her as her child only came one day. I received that nicest email back saying "Thank you! I did not realize that was the procedure for holiday camp. Thank you for clearing that up for me. I appreciate your kindness. You are an asset to the childcare program. They are lucky to have you." How awesome is that? It is sometimes the littlest things that paint the bigger picture!

January 13

Inspiration

Keali Shelton

Patrick Twiss is a true inspiration. If nobody knows, Patrick is in a wheel chair but strives to be like everyone else. One day Patrick and one of his buddy's came in to the lap pool to swim. I was so excited/nervous for Patrick. I had asked him if he would like to use the chair lift and he immediately said "no, I am using the stair." I said okay and let him be and watch Patrick get in to the pool using the stairs, and about 7 noodles. Patrick was swimming the length of the lap pool! Not a lot of people who are able to fully use their bodies can swim laps. I was so proud, excited, and impressed at Patrick. I love his determination to strive to be better!

January 20

Let's Pray

Keali Shelton



I love that the YMCA is a Christian based foundation. I also love that we implement Christian fundamentals. I walked into the Four-year old program and we were waiting on Ms. Royal after they got done swimming. Four of them asked me if they could pray before lunch. I asked them to wait until Ms. Royal got back because I didn't know who prayed the day before. Ms. Royal arrived, she picked someone to say the prayer, and I stayed to pray with them!

"And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- Ephesians 5:20

January 27

New Jewelry

Steven Lynch

As everyone knows I use to work in Childcare before I became the Healthy Living Director. Most days I venture through Childcare just to say hi to the kids and take a break from work. There are some new faces that I don't know but there are also still kids in there that I knew from working over there. One of girls by the name of Bella Ramirez is one that I know and I get a hug from her every time I see her. This time when I was talking to her she had something to give me that she had made, it was a bracelet made from yarn and beads. I do wear it and will until it breaks but thanks to Bella for the bracelet.

Perspective from a Campaigner

Gary Harley



Hello my name is Gary Harley and I have been a member of the YMCA for about 16 years now. I have helped with the Annual Support Campaign several times. Chad is always asking me to help with something or do something for the YMCA. Every time I never hesitate because I love helping the YMCA and especially anything to do with kids and being active. One of my favorite parts with the Campaign is coming to get the food at the orientation meetings. When I sit down to review the names, I just picked some people I knew from working out here and called them. My first couple of years, I would call them that night or the next day. I would always try to be the first one back in the office with pledges. Now, I try to do it within the first week but I just get the cards and call them and ask again. It is easy and it is for a great cause. Count me in!

Perspective from a Campaigner

Gilbert Valerio

Every year around this time since I have been on the YMCA Board we are in the midst of our Annual Support Campaign. We have already had "draft night" which is really fun and a unique way of fundraising for this. Like many people when I first started this I had my doubts about asking people even though I may already know them for money but I have seen and have benefited from this program personally. This program benefits the whole community and no one is denied. It gives people who may for financial reasons may not be able to explore and benefits the YMCA has to offer. It gives discounts on YMCA programs so if you have a big family or maybe even a small family depending on your financial situation you can get some help so your family can participate. I like that when Chad asks members of the board to accompany him to the different schools in our area so he can present scholarships to deserving kids who have been nominated by their teachers for this. When the kids find out that they have won the look of joy on their face is priceless it is such a good program. They get the full treatment with pictures and a certificate this is done right before Christmas break and Chad gives them passes for either family or friends so they can start right away with their YMCA experience. I do remember one year Chad could not make it to Bernadine Sitts and he told me don't worry about it, nothing too it. I will write it out and you just say the words on the sheet and then you will take pictures. Well when I got there I was given a microphone and put on stage for a all school in-service. The students were all hyper anyway because this was the last day before Christmas break so they were loud and anxious to see what the YMCA was doing there. As the students are chosen they go on stage and they are all smiles when they come up and being recognized by their peers. I found that year particularly awesome even though I was not expecting to be talking in front of the whole student body. So in conclusion if you do happen to receive a phone call from someone at the YMCA be it a board member or a campaigner I would ask that you donate to this rewarding cause.

**Every moment spent with you is like a beautiful dream
come true**

February 3

Joy of Music

Steven Lynch

The other day during our Live Strong class we had the participants doing some cardio on some of our machines. Now everyone had someone next to them from class so they could talk while they did the exercise except for Joyce Stoner so I went and rode the bike with her. The whole time it was just small talk until the topic of music was brought up. I myself love all kinds of music and I do have a passion for it (just not talented in music). So for the rest of the time we talked about artist and songs that we enjoyed until we were done. I was good talking to her but what blew me away was that she went home and made a cd of music for me and brought it to me the very next day. The music was before my time but I do still enjoy it, Thanks Joyce.

February 10

Feeling Loved

Steven Lynch

If anybody knows me and knows what department I work in before becoming the Healthy Living Director they would tell you that I worked in child care for a year. So from time to time when walking by I'll stop in the child care room or the four year old room. This day I decided to stop by the 4 year old room and say hi to everyone in there. Keep in mind that at this time the kids that are in there are still the kids that were in there when I was working child care or I know all of them. So instead of just going in and saying hi, which I did, I was mobbed by all of the kids trying to give me a hug or trying to get me to stay in there and play games with them. It is enjoyable to know that even after being out of child care for a while now the kids still enjoy me visiting them.

February 17

Taking Care of our Members

Jackie Regan

I recently was talking with Gary Taton and he told me how great it is that we recently added the Senior and Golden memberships. The price of his membership was discounted and he let me know that he wasn't very far away from it being free. I won't tell how long he has because we all know Gary is very young at heart but I KNOW he will definitely be able to use his Golden membership when he is eligible and we will all still LOVE to see him when he walks through our door!

February 24

It's Like Holy Water

Karen Berry

I just wrote the check for Manuel Beltran referring men's basketball, I was fortunate enough to be at the front desk when he came in to pick it up. The man is 74 years old and he says it is his last year, I hope God tells him otherwise. He said his secret to staying young is surrounding himself with positive people; like those at the Y. He lost a great grandchild this year and it was very difficult for him, but he continued to coach for us on Sundays, he compared coming to the Y like Holy Water you receive at church.

Gratitude

“At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person, each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.”

- Albert Schweitzer

Each year the YMCA continues to add exciting chapters to our rich heritage. This year, my highlight story is three-fold; Financial crunch, Capital Campaign start-up and my absence. All three played a significant role in our operation this past year.

First and foremost, being a YMCA and not having the luxury of utilizing tax dollars, we must rely on the community for our support. The community steps up to the plate each and every year to help us with our operation. And they did that this year as we increased our Annual Support Campaign and our Keeping our Promise contributions! We are so blessed and fortunate to have a community support our YMCA. Membership is the engine that drives our budget and it took a hit this year. So, this past year has been very challenging to say the least. In April, I presented a budget cut plan to remove around \$100,000 in our budget. This came from many resources within our operation. I focused on items that would not cut or remove any of our programs and services. It relied on our staff to jump in with both feet and get cracking down on their department. Some staff had to pitch in and do more work with the elimination of some staff. All staff rose to the challenge and did a great job. The downfall was I couldn't reward the staff with a raise this year as well. I remember in one of our Finance Committee meetings, one of the members asked "how was the staff responding to all the changes and not having any increase in salary". I said they are doing great and I haven't heard one complaint. I think the majority of the Management Staff do this job for a loving, not a living! So, my hats off to the staff for doing a wonderful job!

Secondly, the start of our Capital Campaign generates ton of excitement, but increases my workload immensely! This Capital Campaign will be very exciting with the addition of a Sports Dome and finishing off our projects here at the YMCA. The work started with our Strategic Planning Committee back in 2013 as they recommended in the plans to research the idea of adding a satellite facility. Then, once the Board approved their Strategic goals for our YMCA, we brought it back on the table in late 2014 and at the start of the year to bring in some consultants to interview for a Feasibility Study. The study was completed in the Spring and their report was given to the Board in July. They recommended to the Board that they thought we could conduct a Capital Campaign in the \$2.2 million dollar range. Then, in the Spring, we took our plans to the School Board requesting use of their land. After some discussion and several meetings, we decided on the land next to Kenneth Henderson. This site also included a partnership with the City of Garden City for the paving of the parking lot. This really helps our Campaign to have the support of the school district and the City of Garden City behind our plan. I think nowadays it will take partnerships and collaborations to make our community stronger and better!

The last highlight is the staff responding during my absence with two major surgeries, in particularly Jackie Regan, the Chief Operations Officer. Jackie had to do "double duty" to do her job and cover some of my responsibilities. I tore my Achilles Tendon in late June and had surgery on July 1. This laid me up for about two and half weeks. This is right before I take my vacation to run baseball tournaments and then some time off for vacation. So, pretty much all of July I was gone and the staff ran the show! Then, in October I had hip replacement surgery and was away from the office for about four weeks. Since I have been back, I have had to do therapy and play catch up on many issues. All the staff responded very well and took care of their department. For Jackie, she had to handle the discipline issues and help trouble shoot any problems in my absence. To top this off, her Sports Director quit and left without any notice immediately before the start of the busiest time in Sports. She had to find an interim Sports Director to help until she had time to go through the hiring process. Great job to all the staff and keep up the good work!!!

I am just so thankful for all of you. I am so fortunate to work with such amazing people. Thank you all so much for everything. Words cannot express how grateful I am to each and every one of you. As the CEO, I am proud to lead this wonderful organization and look forward to more exciting chapters yet to be written!

March 3

The Difference

Chad Knight

I was at the welcome center and a member came up and told me she was very impressed! I said great, what are you impressed with? She said the other day when you were sitting down and talking with the kid at that table, I just stopped and watched you in action and how you handled him. It looked like he was in trouble for something and you just made a world of difference with that kid. That's the difference with the YMCA! She said they can have their new building and nice equipment and cheaper prices, but the YMCA is about helping kids and the community. I said THANKS Beverly and she said no problem, it's the truth!

March 10

How can I get mad?

Chad Knight

The racquetball tournament is always a joy to watch and interact with the professionals. The finals were set with Rocky Carson, who was #1 when he entered the tournament and our town favorite Ben Croft. Ben was ranked #5. Steven didn't have anybody to referee this match. So, since nobody else wanted to do it, I stepped in! During the course of the match, Rocky was questioning some of my calls and in particular the racquet head going through the zone of the service box. After a few times I got somebody to watch and monitor this problem with me. We both agreed throughout the match he never crossed it. Actually, I think I did miss one, but anyways. In reference to the calls, Rocky would question and I would reply "short, but good". Rocky got a kick out of this and said many times "How can I get at mad at Chad and his calls" He was laughing. Afterwards, I stopped by John Scott the IRT Network that was shooting video and he said that I was right on for all the calls and he thought I did a great job. He said his message board was getting blowed up because they just loved the way Chad was calling the match. I thought this was pretty awesome and it was a joy to be able to call the game and not get yelled at because of the calls. These guys are playing for big money and this is their livelihood.

March 24

Carl Myers Racquetball Tournament

Jackie Regan

As always after a racquetball tournament I am always so amazed that the great people who come together. The volunteers, who do so many things to help the staff stay sane, the people from all different walks of life across the country who come to passionately compete. Our regulars; Ben, a pro who has been here at least 17 times; Logan, who nearly came to blows his first tournament and now is a close friend to many of us, Alvaro, who acts like he can't speak good enough English to public speak. Our Salina crew- when they don't make it we all notice. Our Colorado families and Wyoming supporters. There are just so many great times and memories made every tournament. This year IRT wanted to know why the tournament was name the Carl Myers tournament. So Chad talked about the support and dedication of Carl Myers to our YMCA and we shared a little more about our Y family to those who may only get to know us for a weekend. The whole weekend is such a blessing; it's the people who make it so!

**Live in the moment and make it so beautiful that it
will be worth remembering**

March 31

LiveStrong

Krystal Richardson

This program kicked off in January of this year and ran for 12 weeks. The program is designed for cancer patients who are currently undergoing chemo treatments or have just finished up. I have been blessed to get to know these ladies and help support them through their LiveStrong journey. Every year for our childcare licensing I am required to hour 15 clock hours of different trainings and I had to attend an all-day one in Liberal. Tami Baehler who was in our LiveStrong program was also there. I grabbed her and asked her how she was doing and how the program went. She proceeded to say that the program was a God send and to never lose the program. She also touched on how much she felt like the Y and staff were a second family to her while she was going through these treatments. She was so very nervous about going out into public with no hair and how would people look at her and would they stare? Tami had never felt more welcome anywhere in her life then she did the day she stepped into the Y for a life-changing program. THANK YOU Tami for allowing us to become a part of your life, your fight and your triumph. You are an absolute inspiration to all of us and we are truly blessed for having the opportunity to get to know you!!!

Board President Perspective

Richard Harp



I considered it an honor to be asked to serve as President of the Y this year. The Y is a tremendous asset to our community and has an impact on many lives every day. The time I spent in board and committee meetings was rewarding knowing our decisions would improve the Y and allow our members to have an exceptional experience during their visits. Something I realized several years ago is that we are blessed to have the dedicated staff that works at the Y. Our staff works well together as a team and is committed everyday to help and serve our members. They spend many hours at the Y working to make sure the experience for our members is positive and beneficial for families, especially children. I greatly appreciate their hard work and dedication to each other and the Y membership. Thanks for a tremendous year of serving others that was both challenging and rewarding for me personally.

“There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.”

-Edith Wharton

April 7

Alicia's Devotion

Jackie Regan

Today at staff meeting I really had to laugh at Alicia's handwritten devotion about preparing for our ARC Banquet tonight. Here are her words: "The Blessings of a Busy Day." Spring has sprung in Garden City, or more accurately POUNCED, with temperatures predicted to reach the eighties today and the nineties tomorrow. Debates about global warming aside, that's more like summer. Just last week the temperatures were dipping into the thirties at night and folks were bemoaning what a cold spring we were having. My husband Jordan left me a note on the fridge this morning reminding me to clean the air conditioner filters. Today I have a lot to do.... In addition to those filters. A devotion to do for staff meeting in the middle of a CRAZY day, gather all the things in my office that make it hard to walk through and take them to the Coop, set up all the things that are going to help make this ceremony tonight special, attempt to come up with something to say for the ceremony (since my boss believes that my voice will work in front of a room of a million beady eyes and ears), try not to throw up in front of everyone or sweat bullets (or worst of all cry) and then I get to help clean up and go home where I will pass out from exhaustion. LOL There are moments when I feel I will never catch up. But the fact that there is so much for me to do-that my days are so packed with life-is a gift, a form of grace.

April 14

DC Annual Meeting 2015

Karen Berry

There is a great difference between being a guest and hostess. I arrive and all is ready. I circulate and attempt to introduce myself to everyone, greeting those I know by name. Noel Gaucin, outgoing Board president introduces me to his daughter in such a fashion that I even think whoever he is talking about is impressive.

I meet a couple new to the DC Y, he had visited his son in Wisconsin and sought us out. At one point I hear his wife say "everyone here but you are getting awards tonight", at another point I see her crying. Cheyenne introduces Member Champion, a man who encourages her when she changed the pool hours. A slender tall African American man with a gentle spirit and whose face has a story all its own. She also has the Family Champion and they share the struggles of changing the pool back to chlorine, it must have been a difficult because the wife is in tears.

There are beautiful children around the room- I expect one to get an award but it doesn't happen. Stacie introduces Healthy Living Champion, a story of a lady who lost over 100 lbs. and how the Y "saved" her life.

Stacie also has the Courage Champion. This award goes to a man who has Alzheimer and Parkinson. He was unable to come because of his failing health, as I prepare this moment for staff meeting today I find out he has passed away, 6 days have passed since the award was given. The award is accepted by his friend and caregiver; as he accepts it, he is overwhelmed with emotion and cannot finish.

The Spirit Mind and Body Award is presented by Chris to a young man who is coach of the year and in his acceptance he states it is he who is blessed by Y.

For the finale, Tarica presents the dedication of the Monumental Moment book. Trevor is a young man with downs syndrome and the biggest smile in the world. When I introduced myself to him I thought he had the softest hands. After 7 people express their love for him, his mom tells him to say thank-you and he sings opera for us. It was a perfect end to heartwarming night.

April 14 GC Annual Meeting 2015 Karen Berry

Each year has its own set of blessing and trials. This year I actually put in over a day of preparation. Set up was probably one of my favorites and I felt peaceful and ready; I wish I had thought to have given a program to Cassandra so she could put the awards of merit in order.

Volleyball team to serve....this is entirely a new twist. Good in the fact we helped another organization, good in the fact we had over twice the amount of help we normally do, thus causing the bad. I dropped the ball because I the play was covered by the team.

I left the building to pick up salad dressing and a few other last minute supplies...never before had I left the meeting. Mistake on my part. Keali showed up early and she had never looked more beautiful. Her heart was open and ready to serve. Brandon helps an elderly lady with a walker into the meeting. Punch is an employee task, not the volleyball team! Showing my age a little but when I think of serving punch, it seems a female would be more appropriate...I keep my mouth shut, because at least now it is an employee. Awards I remember acknowledging Kandace and Terry and I wonder is Wes really has any idea how much I appreciate him.

Most of the ceremony is pretty "la fair se", I am worried about Alicia, this was very difficult for her, however; the staff is aware but I don't think the guest realize it. Things become a blur.

Julie Tull is serving herself water? What? Where is the crew of 11, well eight of them are in the kitchen, which by this point looks like a scene from a National Lampoon movie.

Terry D. is announced. He cries and blushes. Something about a chocolate chef makes me laugh.

Bob Dey humbly accepts the dedication of the Monumental Moment book.

During clean up I hurt Chad's feelings. I wore dress shoes and when I take them off the skin on my heel comes off with them. Back at the Y, I talk to Alicia and feel relieved it is over.



April 28

The Special Note

Chad Knight

Today in my box was a note from one of our members, Jay Edwards from our ARC banquet. The ARC banquet is our annual recognition and celebration banquet we do each year for our members, staff, volunteers, donors and other supporters of our great organization. This past one, Jay was recognized as the Member Champion and left me a nice note. Here is the sample of the note:

Chad with Jay Edwards comments and note:

"First of all, thank you and the Garden City YMCA for all you do for the people in our community. What a great and powerful impact you have. Secondly, thank you for the invitation to the wonderful banquet. Likewise, the award I received was unexpected and truly humbles me. Try as I might, I thought I was keeping a low profile and not calling attention to myself.

To allay the cost of the plaque and the banquet, please accept the enclosed check. Also, you might be interested in the article by some nerd

who travels around watching minor league teams meeting people and seeing America"

Jay Edwards

Now, isn't that an AWESOME letter and a wonderful gesture by Jay? I thought it was too cool and had to share it with the staff regarding the banquet. I put his donation to our Annual Support Campaign. THANKS Jay for the kind words and compliment, it was GREAT!



Aquatics Director Highlight

Keali Shleton

Not only do I work for the YMCA but I also volunteer for the YMCA. I am a volunteered coach and have been since I started working for the Y which was 3 1/2 years ago. I have 2 younger sisters and I have coached them through volleyball and basketball. I started with Kindergarten volleyball and basketball with my youngest sister Chloe and she is now a 2nd grader. I also coached 3rd through 5th grade volleyball with my sister Rileigh. This volleyball season I coached 5th & 6th graders. I was excited and nervous all at the same time. I have never coached a team this high up in the grade levels. I knew the games would be more intense, practices would have more drills, and parents and officials would be harder to please. We had our first practice all I did was serve, some drills, and a small scrimmage to see how these girls would play as a team. Our first game had rolled around and the girls played well individually but not as a team. After our first game, I felt



that the practices were always the same; we would warm up with serving, do a couple of drills, and then scrimmage the rest of the practice. I wanted these girls to improve individually but also learn how to play as a team! I had 2 girls who could not get the ball over the net when they served. The next couple of games were slow steps to working as a team but every game, I would tell the girls, "You have to cheer on your team mates, whether you are on the court or on the bench... this will be the only way that we will win. We have to stay positive!" Positive attitude really goes a long way; last game of the season, the 2 girls who could not get a ball over the net were serving and the balls were just flying over the net! We played out league games and ended up with a 3-3 record. We are now onto the tournament and I was more nervous than every because everything would be double intensified. Our very first game we played was against a team who had beaten us in a 2 to 1 game. I had told the

girls at practice before the tournament so they could prepare and they all freaked out; they did not want to even play this team let alone for our first game. During practice and right before the game, I hyped them up; I told them we could beat this team, in fact, all I wanted to do was beat this team. I didn't care about the rest of the tournament, I just wanted the beat this team and so did the girls. I knew that just winning this particular game that's all the girls wanted. It was a 2 game match and we had won the first game but lost the second, both by just a couple of points. We are now onto the 3rd match; it was only to 15 points and right before we hit the court, I hyped up the girls again. "Positive energy, cheer on our team mates (good or bad), this will be the only way we will beat them... WE DID IT!! We won against this team! The girls, myself, and the parents were so excited! We have now moved on to our 2nd game of the tournament. The girls were hyped up and ready to go! They played their best and with positive energy, we had won again! We are now in the championship game; a 3-3 record team playing against a 5-1 record team. I knew this game would be intense and I knew the opposing team would have just as much positive energy as we did... It came down to it, a 3 match game again; we had won the first but lost the second. Both teams were tired; I had called several time outs throughout the first 2 games just to reassure them that we could win, we could be the champions. In our last match to determine who would win, my girls were losing focus. Serves weren't going over, passes weren't going up, and the energy level had sunk. It was 8-10 with us having 8; I called a time out and told the girls, "You have to stay focused, we are so close, don't lose this positive energy, they are just as tired but they keep talking, we can do this, cheer on your team mates, and we will win!" I was stressed, I couldn't sit down, and I was constantly crouching to the ground. My heart was racing and my hands were shaking. This was the best moment for everyone. It was match point for us and we had one of our hardest servers up. Serve went up, over, rallied back, and our last pass won the game! WE WON THE CHAMPION GAME!!!!

Everyone was jumping up and down just ecstatic! A 3-3 record team just beat a 5-1 record whom we had lost to during the regular season. I was told that this was the most intense volleyball game some people had ever seen. I could not have been more proud of my girls! They had worked so hard at every practice, all of them willing to lean, improve, and try new things. Every game, they became more than just a team... they became friends; yes they learned new skills and improved old skills but the best skill ever was learning how to be cheerful, positive, and confident that is how they became a team. We received our 1st place medals and celebrated at Pizza Hut afterwards. This was the best season, team, games, and girls I have ever coached. Again, I could not be more proud as a coach and as a YMCA employee.



May 5

Facebook Support

Jackie Regan

Recently we did a competition on our Facebook page challenging our friends to like our page and give a comment why. We had quite a few great responses. Around this time I also noticed one of our members, Bailey Glanzer, posted her story on focusing her life on healthy living and the challenges and obstacles she had been through. It was a very inspiring story and I shared it with our staff so they could remember what great things we provide for our community!

May 12

"Today is a good day for a good day"

Karen Berry

2 months earlier Terry Major sees me in the hall and asked about National Day of Prayer Breakfast, "Yes we need to get going on that," I reply and promptly return to working on the cash flow. 3 weeks ago, "Oh my goodness, it is 3 weeks away." I call a quick meeting. Terry Major, Scott Schurle, Jackie, Krystal and I meet. "Who will speak on such a short notice?" Krystal is preparing for Livestrong celebration and she suggests they might be willing to share...that was truly a God moment. One day ago, Marcy gets the constant contact email out. It is Wednesday evening, 12 hours and counting, Alicia and I settle in for a long night. Scott has brought out tables and we begin the decoration finishing about 11:30 pm. It's a restless night and an early morning, Haydee at Golden Corral has an even earlier morning preparing our breakfast. I realize at 10 minutes and counting I haven't done the agenda. Chad does the welcome, Terry Major blesses the food. Krystal and Steven introduce the Livestrong Ladies. Julie, a former membership volunteer, shares with raw emotion her battle with colon cancer, her quiet moments she spent with the Lord and the love and support of the group. Leona struggles to share the sad news with her children of her breast cancer diagnosis; she finds hope and comfort in others. Next is our very own Kay, who was our early morning smile for many years, she conquered bone cancer and the loss of her husband simultaneously. Finally is Tami who combats breast cancer and must fight her own anger as well, while relocating her home. All of their courage and bravery bring glory to our Lord and the power of prayer. Terry ask us to pray together on the subjects recommended for National Day of Prayer, God's heart must have been warmed when Abby, a child, prays for the Family. The breakfast concludes but the Livestrong ladies linger confiding in one another, and once again we witness God's grace. All the Y staff join in the event tear down and clean up because Krystal has Plains Elementary coming in at 9:30, and before you know it the Y is full of little orange smurfs! Don't you just love this place!



Psalm 103:5a "who satisfies your desires with good things"

May 26

24 Hour Guy

Crystal Ibarra

Today I had a text and it said "Wow, who is your 24 hour guy? He does amazing. He smiled and greeted me as I walked in, even held a conversation with me." I was a little embarrassed because I didn't know who it was. I got to work and asked Steven, I let Steven know what he said and he said "yeah I've heard some great things about him, sad part is he just put in his two weeks because he is moving back to Kansas City."

Chief Financial Officer Highlight Karen Berry

"Only God can hear the cry of his people" Michael Youssef

Another year has once again flown by. I am sure both branches have experienced death of members; in Garden we have seen the death of a small child, a strong man in mid-life and old friends. Our member's as well have lost loved ones. Both branches have been served by volunteers with both experience and knowledge we would be lost without their help. Staff as usual has come and gone.

I have learned from mistakes of my own and of others. I have learned to surrender. I have seen both waste and frugality. I have seen selfishness and unbelievable generosity. I have seen suffering and success; turmoil and peace; strife and understanding. I have been blessed by a mediator, the energy of a cheerleader, the peace of a Christian, the wisdom of good counsel, the experience of time on task, and the struggles of a leader.

My heart has been warmed by tears from big black eyes, children recognizing me as part of the Y, couples in love after years of marriage, smiles that encourage me and well-disciplined people that consistently do what it takes to keep growing. I find hope in new lives soon to join our staff members, in new opportunities to serve, and in scripture revealing truth of life. I will end with this beautiful prayer written by Reinhold Niebuhr and his daughter, you will recognize it but read to the very end. I was given this gift a few years ago by kind Christian leader when I was in desperate need of hope and I wish to share it with you:

God, give me grace to accept with serenity
the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things
which should be changed,
and the Wisdom to distinguish
the one from the other.
Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
Taking, as Jesus did,
This sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it,
Trusting that You will make all things right,
If I surrender to Your will,
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with You forever in the next.
Amen.



Chapter 6



June 2

All the time God is Good!

Karen Berry

This is a very difficult subject, a YMCA's worst nightmare. That being said, God is greater. It is a typical, first week of school being out, payroll processing Friday afternoon, things are hectic, Debbie from Dodge is in Garden doing her payroll.. My door opens and Kandace my assistant is sobbing, there has been an incident in pool with one of the children. Prayers begin. Our lifeguard Kalee has been trained in CPR, since December, she and 2 children pulled a child from the water. Thank you God, C.J. was alert and aware. EMS responds faster than normal. Keali has just finished teaching a new CPR class, disconcerted by the news as she was walking back into her office she jounces to the pool deck and helps with CPR. Later that evening a grateful grandmother posts on Facebook how she appreciates the Y staff. To God be the Glory, amen.
Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give hope and a future."

June 16

It's a GREAT day

Chad Knight

I had a presentation at the Lions Club for breakfast and during my speech, one of the people in the audience said they loved to call the YMCA because of message "It's a great day at the YMCA." He said this just brings enthusiasm and gets me excited to talk to the staff on the other end. He went on to say that they are always so pleasant and have all the answers I need every time I call and they make sure I get to visit with the person I contacted.

June 23

Diabetic 101

Krystal Richardson

I am blessed each and every day with the kiddos that come and go! On occasion we get might get a child that needs us more than others and Nathan Rogers is no exception. Nathan is diabetic and relies heavily on an insulin pump, and I had no clue! His mother Jennifer is absolutely AMAZING and did everything you could think imaginable to make sure myself and all the rest of the staff knew how to treat and take care of Nathan. She took the time to type up what is levels should look like and what to do for high and lows. She and I did a lot of texting and made calls if needed and Nathan did good to come to us if he felt off in any way. She made it a point to come and chat with me to make sure thing were going well and we needed anymore snacks for his snack bag. I had the pleasure of chatting with Jennifer the other day and she had nothing but praise for the YMCA, childcare and the staff. She said she wasn't sure if Nathan would be back next year but she said she will always be willing to help, volunteer, teach classes if needed and do anything to help make the YMCA all that it can be. She was absolutely impressed with how well Nathan was doing and how having him attend Real Men/Real Leaders while in Summer camp has helped with his attitude and argumentative side. I am soooo thankful for the opportunity that Jennifer has given myself and the rest of the staff to care for Nathan. Being diabetic is very serious and needs to be taken that way. We have been rewarded to learn how to treat, maintain and care for Nathan throughout this summer and for that I THANK YOU! It is the knowledge that Jennifer was so willing to share that will make us that much more prepared for others in the future who might need our care who are also diabetic!!!

Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined.

- Henry David Thoream

Family Director Highlight

Krystal Richardson



I wasn't quite sure what I wanted my highlight story to be this year as my family has been hammered with some trials. We have also been blessed with some miracles as well and I would like to share them with you.

January to April were pretty good months for us, we celebrated birthdays, anniversaries and of course made it through our Annual Recognition and Celebration dinner here at the Y! What a great night that is to honor and celebrate many accomplishments and milestones for our members, donors and staff!

In May we had our Prayer Breakfast and our speakers were our first group of ladies who participated in our LiveStrong program here at the Y! This program focuses on cancer patients who have been through the chemo and are fighting their way back to some sort of normal. During their AMAZING speeches I struggled to keep it together as hear each of their stories, struggles and the fight they had to endure to get to this point of their healing. We were awaiting results from a biopsy that my mom had taken from her left breast. It was May 18, 2015 and I got the news from my brother that my mom had cancer. I broke down as if it was the end of the world, in my defense her mother and father both died from cancer. I wasn't quite sure how to function so I just hugged my husband cried! I wasn't sure where we all needed to go from here, but I knew my mom was going to need me through it all! It was like a whirlwind of Dr. appointments after Dr. appointments and what they were doing and how everything was going to happen over the next year!

We were all trying to drink this all in and we got some FANTASTIC news, I was pregnant!!! This was HUGE news due to the problems we have had in the past with conceiving. How blessed were we to be pregnant and my mom getting all the necessary help to fight through her cancer! I celebrated my birthday on June 5th and the next day June 6th we had a miscarriage, another blow to me and my family. Between the diagnosis of my mom's cancer and our miscarriage I felt the weight of the world had fallen on me and there was to be no recovery. This all happened within three weeks and I wasn't sure if my faith was being tested, but I knew the only person who could help me through this was my Heavenly Father. I prayed soooo much for peace, guidance, acceptance and healing and through it all HE was there with me and my family.



Over the next month to two months we continued to pray, go to Dr. appointments, chemo treatments and overall try to live as normal a life as possible. On July 23 I made a call to my Dr. and went in to see him as I thought I was pregnant again, or still? I had my blood drawn only to have him call me back later that day to confirm that there was something definitely there. He instructed me to go to the ER on the 25th for more blood work only to confirm I was actually pregnant! I couldn't believe it! We had been blessed with another little miracle and we could not have been more excited. The first ultrasound did in fact confirm a baby and I would have to discontinue going to treatments with my mom. I did however continue with the Dr. appointments so I could be the second set of ears and ask questions if needed. She completed her first 12 weeks of chemo and then started her next 12 weeks of chemo and on November 17 she completed both rounds and her blood work was showing no cancer! The next step was to schedule surgery and radiation, which we did. In December we dealt with my mom having surgery, me failing my sugar test....twice and being diagnosed with gestational diabetes, we found out my mom is/was a stage four breast cancer (this was NEVER told to us) and finally to put the cherry on top we found out that we are having another boy! All of these trials, tribulations, ups, downs, happiness and sadness were ALL blessings in disguise. My mom and I are truly blessed to work at the Y and to have another family who has been there through all the tears, good news and bad news. They have prayed for us, checked on us, supported us and have been an intricate piece to this puzzle the Lord has given us. All the staff, members, participants and parents who have been a part of this journey....THANK YOU!!!



Chapter 7



July 7

A little Help

Jackie Regan

Today Karen stopped by my office with a boy and a bit of a panicked look on her face. She informed me this boy had come in looking for Krystal or Chad to help him get his foster brother to come in the Y and neither were there. I asked the boy what was going on and he explained. I knew that his brother that was in the car and didn't want to come in wouldn't know me, so I would be very little help. I went in search of the counselors who jumped into action. Two of them went right out. And a little boy said, "Let me help, I am his friend." Off he went. I heard later that was just the right thing to do... Our little helper had no problems convincing his friend to come and for some fun!

July 14

People are hopping the Gap

Karen Berry

It is fun to watch people do the hopscotch board in the front hall between the gate and spinning room. Hopefully they are reading as they go! We all need to be aware of the Y's programs on Water Safety, Summer Learning, Health and fighting hunger.

July 21

Activtrax

Steven Lynch

Don Tull is one of our members here at the YMCA that is on the Activtrax program. This is a program that creates different workouts every day for a person. Don does it just about every day and has logged quite a few workouts. He came into my office one day just to talk for a few minutes before he did his cardio part. He was telling me how the little task that were difficult to do have become much easier to do now and that keeps him motivated, I believe, to keep working at it. Hopefully he knows and realizes that he is doing good work and keeps it up. Good job to Don.

July 28

Private Water Safety Class

Keali Shelton

In all of my years teaching swim lessons, I have never seen a child at the age of 3 swim and dive. Little miss Eden proved that at any age can a child learn how to swim. At 3 years old Eden took private water safety classes with her 6 year old sister (who was a phenomenal swimmer as well). By the end of the lessons, Eden could dive off of the diving bock and swim the length of the lap pool. AMAZING!

Healthy Living Director Highlight Steven Lynch

The year 2015 had its ups and downs for myself and the Healthy Living department but there were still some very good highlights. What I want to focus on are the new programs that I was able to get started in 2015 and also a couple of collaborations with other great organizations.

The first was a collaborations with Anita Gottsponer and the girls at ESA Alpha Zeta and there Glow Run. I started with Anita asking Chad about it and then Chad directing her to me. So we talked about it and of course we were going to help them out. The great thing about the run was that all the proceeds went to the Family Crisis Services and St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital. So I made flyers and got the word out and it ended up being a great turn-out. We ended with just a shade under 200 runners and raised \$4000+ for the two organizations. I look forward to working with them again in 2016. The second highlight is a combination of two programs that started in 2015. The first program was our LiveStrong program and the second was our Superhero Run. The LiveStrong program is for cancer survivors and is completely free for 12 weeks. It is designed to help survivors regain the strength that they have lost, but through the 12 weeks it does so much more for every participant. And the Superhero Run was my fundraiser for the LiveStrong program. It is probably my favorite run because everyone came out and wore their favorite superhero for the run and a few kids plus a dog were in full on superhero costumes, it was awesome to see. In 2016 we look to do more sessions of the LiveStrong and have more people run for the LiveStrong in the Superhero Run.

The last event that I got started in 2015 was our Healthy Kids Club near the end of the year. It is a program for youth ages 8-13 and aimed at teaching them good habits from exercise to nutrition. Also with it we want to address childhood obesity as well. For the first two months the kids that are signed up are enjoying the class and have resigned up for it as well. Healthy Kids Club is just getting started but we have two experts in health and nutrition speak to the class and things can only go up from there. So here to having a great 2016 for the healthy living minded people and everyone else in whatever they pursue.



August 4

A Superhero Family

Jackie Regan



Steven hosted the Inaugural Superhero Run two weeks ago on Saturday. For a first time hosting we had a pretty good turnout of about thirty participants. The highlight for all the volunteers was seeing the Ty, Lacy, Miles and Ma Brookover there participating as a family. Miles and Max were all decked out to the nines and even brought a friend and his dog along to the party! It's great to see families together working on healthy lifestyles and participating for a good cause!

August 11

Our Christian Emphasis

Jackie Regan

In the past few years we have tried to do a better job of emphasizing our Christian mission and values. This is something we as a staff and our volunteers has felt was extremely important. So a committee was put together to come up with ideas on how to do this. We added our prayer breakfast and bible quotes on employees shirts. We also added bible quotes above the drinking fountains. The other day I came upon a group of Childcare kids getting a drink of water. The kiddos were all trying to read the quote aloud so I read it to them. They thought it was so neat that there was "Jesus" above the water fountains and thanked me for explaining what it meant. It was a touching moment!

August 18

Show us the way!

Crystal Ibarra

I was walking around the facility picking up trash when Janice stopped me and asked if I could help her with a machine. I told her I wasn't sure but I would try. As we got back to the cardio area, Jesscia (one of our MSA staff) was working out. So I asked her to help. Jessica got on the machine and began to show her. Once she showed her she had her get on the machine so she could make sure she was doing it correctly. Thank you Jessica and Welcome to the YMCA family Janice.

The Y...So Much More!

Chad Knight

I was talking with Nelda and Bev about the new place opening up. They went on to say that the YMCA does more than what the other place has to offer. Bev said especially you Chad how you get down and talk to the kids and carry on a serious conversation with them to child care to everything else. I said it is kinda funny you say that because our theme is "The Y...So Much More!" I said this is ironic as you are telling me that statement. They both said, it is so true! The YMCA does much more! Bev went on to say, I wish more people would realize what the YMCA does for our community. I couldn't agree any more with Bev's statement. THANKS Nelda and Bev!

There are moments in my life I will always remember not because they were important but because you were there

Chief Operations Officer Highlight Jackie Regan



In 2014, the YMCA of SWKS began to implement LIVESTRONG at the YMCA, a health and wellness program designed for cancer survivors. As an organization, the Y understands that 1:2 people have someone they know that has been touched by cancer. This program is a FREE twelve week program for adult cancer survivors lead by certified staff with the intention of guiding cancer survivors in finding their "new normal."

Beginning this program had many challenges. We put together a team of myself, Stacie, Healthy Living Director of Dodge City and Sarah, Healthy Living Director in Garden City. We started with many conference calls to learn about the program and what it would take to implement. Then, a trip to Chicago and a trip to St. Louis, finally after all the prework in 2014 we were ready to implement in 2015. During the time period Sarah left our Y and Lisa took over. She and Stacie became certified LiveStrong Instructors. We started our first session, our trial run in Garden City.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays the group met with Lisa and sometimes Stacie. As a staff, many of us bought yellow LiveStrong shirts and wore them in support. We watched them grow closer and a group and many of our staff bonded with them individually. At the end of it, they did a group potluck and celebrated their "graduation."

The most touching moment for me after this was the prayer breakfast. Every year, since the Y is a Christian organization, our Christian Emphasis committee celebrates National Day of Prayer. On May 7th, the LiveStrong graduates were our guest speakers. As each of them told the story of their journey through cancer I saw many wet eyes around the room. Their strength and faith was AMAZING. And the willingness to stand up and tell their stories truly touched me as well as the rest of the staff. What TOUGH, TOUGH women they all are.

Implementing the LiveStrong program was a lot of time and hours but the culmination of it hearing those stories on such a blessed day was truly heartwarming and well worth the efforts it took!

So to Lacey, Joyce, Tammie, Kay, Julie and Leona—you women inspired us all! You were our first group and will always be special to all of us. God Bless.

"Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day"—
Kings 8:28

"Every day so many people pass through our lives, each person leaving behind a small part of themselves, giving us a broader understanding of life."

- Author: Unknown

Chapter 9



September 1

Pool is AMAZING!

Chad Knight

I was talking with JD Farr about the pool and the YMCA. He went on to tell me how much the pool means to him and his wife and what it does for the whole community. He was just going on and on the impact it has on a ton of people in the community and how it makes a big difference in their lives. He said it really does! I told JD I agreed and I appreciate the nice comment. JD attends the water aerobics class in the morning with his wife and was very appreciative of the pool.

September 8

Weight loss!

Steven Lynch

As I was sitting in my office, David Ibarra walked in and was on cloud nine. He says. "I know I only joined in March but I have already lost 18 pounds. I'm so proud of myself". I let him know how proud I was as well and to keep up the great work!!

September 15

Members helping Members

Crystal Ibarra

I was giving a new member a tour of our facility, she began to talk to Adriana Calderon. Adriana told her if she needed a workout partner or just some motivation to just let her know. Members helping members, What an amazing facility to be apart of.

September 22

Appreciate You

Krystal Richardson

I was approached by Linda Selee in and attempt to get a copy of the Youth of the Month award that Esther had received this month. She was wanting a copy to send to her Grandmother in California. I was happy to help and get a copy or two for them, but as technology works I could not pull it up then. Once I was able to pull it up I emailed it to Scott and proceeded to tell him that Esther absolutely deserved this award and recognition. He emailed me back saying "Thanks for all your work and great staff you have assembled to care for the kids!" Oh my gosh, how great is it to know that parents are paying attention and watching you and your staff care for their kiddos. I absolutely appreciate you allowing us to take care of Esther and entrust us with her care and needs!

Property Manager Highlight

CJ Perkins

My Highlight would have to consist of a few things that have happened to me over the past three years working here at the YMCA. First I would say becoming employee of the month twice in 2013. Which I never would have thought that could happen to me but it wasn't over, that same year I was given a plaque for being the employee champion. I was surprised and thankful for being awarded something for just doing my job. That's what the YMCA is all about Caring for somebody and showing their appreciation for all of the employee's hard work, which is why I love working here. From there I became the maintenance coordinator in 2014 and was Joe Garcia's right hand man. Joe was my mentor and taught me everything I know of how to maintain the Y. If it wasn't for him I wouldn't be where I'm at today which brings me to the next best thing that happened to me in 2015 I was told that I had the chance to become the property manager! I remember telling Joe when I was a building supervisor that I would have his job one day after he retired and sure enough I got my chance. When Joe was away from the YMCA for a period of time I was on my own to hold down the fort as they would say. As I was working I learned a lot of what it took to maintain the building but was still in contact with Joe when I needed his help. When he came back he started to show me the ropes on to becoming the property manager. I was thankful to have a great mentor like Joe Garcia. On October 1st 2015 I officially became the property manager for the YMCA. I've been blessed to be a part of this Y family and hope I am still here for many more years to come.



Chapter 10



October 6

A new start

Krystal Richardson

I love hearing stories and talking to members, participants, friends and parents of my childcare kiddos. We are blessed each year to have six of our afterschool sites funded by United Way. One of the requirements is that we put in volunteer hours and a lot of these hours get done during the two weeks we do our Tyson Campaign to help raise those funds for the up-coming year. I have a few of my childcare parents that are volunteering as well and we have time to chat, answer questions or give out guest passes. I LOVE giving out guest passes and I always try to keep a handful on me, well in my purse just in case I am approached or asked about joining or someone needing one. A while back I was chatting with Brooke Lopez and she had mentioned some of her clients maybe needing to come in and start working out. She wanted to know what the monthly membership cost and information on the scholarships we offer. I took the time and explained it all to her and then proceeded to let her know that I could give her some passes and her clients could come in and try out our facility for FREE and then we would go from there. Brooke took six 30 day guest passes back with her and gave them to her clients. We had one in particular who started using the passes right away and when I saw Brooke the other day at another United Way event she proceeded to tell me that this individual had been using the passes and was in the Y every day. She told me that they had lost some weight and was feeling better about herself. It is AMAZING to me to hear such a success story out of a couple of 30 day passes and it is moments like these that make me so proud to be a part of the YMCA movement.

October 13

Walk This Way

Krystal Richardson

Isn't that the BEST title to a story EVER?!? So, Corporate Cup came to an end on Saturday the 10th and I as usual I packed up my whole family and went down to participate in the 2 mile walk/run and chili cook-off! To make a long story kind of shorter, this was also the time Chad was healing from his terrible achilies surgery and he showed up to walk and support the Y and Corporate Cup as a whole. I had my son with my in his stroller and my niece. We decided to stay behind and keep an eye on Chad to make sure he could make it the two miles. Well, we fell behind and then caught up and then he fell behind and then as we got closer to the finish line caught up again. My son asks me if he can get out and walk the rest of the way? I let him out and he stayed between us and Chad as we went around the last horse shoe to the finish line. Let's rewind real quick....my son was scared of Chad. Every time he was at the Y and would see Chad coming, Taylor would hide behind more try and go the other way as far away from Chad as possible. Fast forward to the walk/run and as he is walking between us as car started coming and I told him to come and grab my hand. Taylor proceeded to run right past me to Chad and grabbed his hand. He held onto Chad's hand until they crossed the finish line!!! It was one of those AWWWW so cute moments that I will never forget. Chad and him were buddies that day and Taylor looked out for him the whole way! Thanks Chad for allowing my son to cross the finish line with you and GOOD JOB for not giving up and ALWAYS supporting th Y in ALL things you do!



October 20

The Chili Champ

Jackie Regan

On Saturday we had our annual corporate cup chili cookoff. In the past we only had one chili from each team to judge. Last year, we changed the rules so that every chili could be judged. And what a tough competition it was this year. We had EIGHTEEN chili's for our judges to choose between, and it was NOT an easy choice. In the end there had to be a winner. And the winner was.....Devi Bluvan!!!

October 27

Volleyball Champs

Keali Shelton

Out of the past 3 years that I have coached any sport, I have yet to have a winning champ team. I'm not the type of coach to strive to be champions. I'm the type of coach to improve each game as a team and as an individual player. This year, I got to coach a 5th&6th grade volleyball team due to my sister being a 5th grader; I was so excited and nervous. We had our practices, we win some we lose some, and the girls are improving every time they touch a volleyball. We have our last practice before our tournament and I tell the girls who we play first Saturday afternoon. On a whole other story, they were disappointed and I had told them, "I don't care if we lose the tournament, all I want to do is win this first game and I want you girls to play with all your hearts." We play our first game against the team the girls were not very excited for and we win in the 3rd game! The girls were so happy, I was happy, and the crowd was excited! We are now playing in the championship game; I've talked the girls up, told them to be positive, and cheer on your team mates... this is how we will win this. We rally back and forth; one of the best games as told by quite a few people. Match point for us in the second game; if we hit this over, we are the 5th & 6th grade champions... WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!!! I was so excited, my girls did it!!! We went from 3-3 during season to 1st place champions!!!! I could not have been more proud of these girls and as a coach!!! This was the best team I have ever coached!



Membership Director Highlight Crystal Ibarra



Well what can I say, 2015 was again an awesome year for me. This was my second year as the Membership Director. January was our biggest month of the year. We had 207 new members join our facility. To start off our year we had 6,189 and we ended our year with 5,475 member. We had over 10,000 guests for membership that we able to come in and see what makes our facility stand out! Our shake bar helps give our members and guests the resources to make healthy choices quick and easy! Our shake bar sold over 1,700 shakes, that's almost five shakes a day! My first year of being Membership Director, I was somewhat quiet and scared to go out and meet new people. But after I did a variety of volunteer work at our schools and city-wide events, it helped me open up and get a better understanding of what our community needs. I started going to the Ribbon Cuttings to not only meet and greet our new businesses, but to also spread our core values and what the YMCA stands for. It has been so much easier to talk to

people and help learn what the YMCA means to each and every one of our members. At the end of the year we also added a special for our senior members! We added rates for those over 65 and a golden membership for those over 80. The Golden Membership was a big hit. Anyone over the age of 80 receives a FREE lifetime membership. This is our way of showing our appreciation to those who have helped build and mold our community to what it is today. I had so many members come to me and thank me for the opportunity to continue being active without worrying about the financial obligations. Seeing how happy it made them, made me smile. What a wonderful feeling it gives me to be able to help out our community.

Chapter 11



November 3

Little Kickers

Jackie Regan

Another weekend, another day in the gym. This weekend soccer began. Always an adventure on the first weekend of a sport, but soccer....well that can be a little more chaotic than some. Games start. The three year olds cry and mom or dad have to be on the court with them. You see them climbing over the borders to sit on mom's lap. Some stand in one place. I do the pledge and they all stare at me solemnly, clearly not understanding what we are doing here. The 5 & 6 year olds get a little better. One rushed to kick the ball from the center...oops though not his team's turn. The ball is being kicked by one around the perimeter of the court, no direction toward the goal but all the players trail behind.... On it goes, ball, player.....with a few players all following behind. It's a chase! Switch the gym for full court and now we have 1st-6th grade. We actually see some competition here. They pass with purpose and are aiming for the goal. All the levels of play are fun in their own way and I enjoy watching them. We have some great coaches at all levels which is great for the development and growth of soccer in our community.

November 10

Bullying Addressed

Krystal Richardson

It is never fun getting a phone call, email or text from one of my parent's regarding a possible bullying situation. Well, it happened and while I was on vacation nonetheless. I sprung into action getting in touch with staff and parents to nip this in the bud ASAP. We had all of our I's dotted and T's crossed for school to get out that day. This child was being bullied at school and at the Y afterschool program by the same little boy. Mom contacted us as well as the school so we could get it resolved. Her child did not attend that day and was out sick the following Monday and Tuesday. I got a text from Jackie that this parent had been in contact with her and needed assurance that her child would NOT be bullied since she would be there afterschool. I immediately emailed mom back and let her know what we are doing to prevent this from happening again. She emailed back and thanked us for our help on this matter and she appreciated all we were doing. I hadn't hear anything over the next couple of days, so I emailed mom on Thursday to ask about how everything had been going as I was out of town. I did not get a reply back until Monday and here is what she said :

"I apologize for not responding Friday I was out unexpectedly for the day. I first want to say thank you for your quick reaction to the situation and for alerting your staff. The same thing was done at school and with your help and their things are going much better. The little boy has been nice to my daughter and there have been no more incidents. I cannot say enough about how much better the Y program is with you running it. I have mentioned in the past my two older children tried the Y after school program and it was short lived because of how things were done. I feel very confident and comfortable with my daughter going to the YMCA and it has everything to do with you and your staff. Thank you again and again for helping resolve this situation. I think things should be just fine from here on out. Have a great week!" Another testament to how building relationships can make all the difference in the world.

November 17

Great Tournament

Steven Lynch

We just finished our 25th Annual Turkey Shootout Racquetball Tournament and it was a big hit and possibly our best one yet. Not only did I think it went very well there were tons of compliments from everyone in attendance. Things that range from staying on time to the great hospitality that we provide. One example is that the top two pros named Kane and Rocky sat and just ate lunch and talked with anyone that would listen which is something amateurs get don't get to do at other tournaments. Also we are constantly told we have the best tournament which doesn't hurt to hear. It is great that we get the opportunity to host the shootout every year and bring in these great players.

November 24

No problem

Chad Knight

I made a call to Gail Lee with Lee Construction and inquired about Keeping Our Promise. Gail said "No problem. I drive by the YMCA and it is always full. My grandkids are participating in everything and it is a highly utilized facility. We are blessed to have a YMCA in our community. I would love to help with this program. Thanks for asking." Isn't that AWESOME? This goes to show the support the YMCA receives from the community. We are very fortunate and blessed to have the community help the YMCA!

Chapter 12



December 1 Bumps & Bruises

Jackie Regan

The other day a little boy hurt his knee while playing in the gym. Someone brought him to the front and we got him an ice pack. We notified mom and I hobbled him over to the table to sit down with some other kids. We pulled up a chair for his leg to rest on and the other kids and I started talking to him. He pulled a book out of his backpack and proceeded to tell us all about his favorite football players. It was great to just hang out and talk to the kiddos for a little while and hear them all talk about who is really, "the best".

December 8 The Special Gift

Chad Knight

As I was sitting in my office, someone knocks on my door and I say come in. Low and behold it was Ross and Deidre Myers. Ross is the son of Carl Myers who was my first boss when I was 16 years old and my first Board President I worked under. Carl passed away and we have since started the Carl Myers Racquetball Tournament. Since this inception of this tournament, Ross and Deidre has made a donation on behalf of Carl to the YMCA. They stopped in because they haven't sent their donation in for this year and wanted to visit. I showed them around and we visited and had a great conversation. As they were making the payment at the Welcome Center, Ross was thanking me for everything we have done and I am thinking, we are grateful for your gift and this donation will always be special in my heart because of Carl Myers and the work he did for our YMCA. I told Ross that the air units he pretty much rebuilt 15 years ago are still working like a new unit and that was just one of many projects Carl did in his spare time for us. I can still remember when Carl showed up the day before Thanksgiving and delivered a ham to my house when I was only 16 years old. I will forever be grateful to the Myers family.



Picture of Kane Waselchuck & Rocky Carson (#1 and #2 in world). Coming off the court during the Carl Myers Racquetball Tournament

December 15 Strong is the new healthy

Keali Shelton

I've always said that the water is the best place for anyone to be. If anyone knows Paysley you will know the condition she is in however, she is the strongest child I know! Reagan started bring Paysly to "water therapy" to help relive some pressure but also strengthen her weakest points. Paysly had another surgery coming up and Reagan wanted to make sure she had enough water time to make it through. I love that Reagan brings Paysly to the pool; she even bought her a head float that I had told her about. The head float is great and allows Paylsy's head to stay above water but also keep her body free, unlike a Coast Guard vest which straps the chest in. Paysley coming in to work in the water has been amazing, Reagan has seen her tremendous improve in strength and mobility! She is a strong little girl with so much love!



December 22 KOP baby!

Chad Knight

This year we surpassed 80 kids who received the Keeping Our Promise free memberships and these kiddo's are very excited when we announce their names. This year, we have multiple siblings from the schools and were able to make them family memberships for many of them. I have had several families thank me immensely for this gift. They appreciate the memberships and that their kid is getting recognized. This is what the YMCA is all about, making a difference. I cannot thank our sponsors enough for this great program we offer to the community. We are truly blessed. THANKS everyone!

Development Director Alicia Johnston

I think it is hard for me to write a highlight about anything else when this is such a moving moment in my year. Keeping Our Promise is a time where we see the faces of the kids we are affecting first hand. Not to mention that it is at the end of the year when it is fresh on the mind!!

So... Chad, Jackie, and I had a fun day of running around between five different schools on Friday, December 18th. It was crazy trying to fit in all of the KOP's, along with having our Joint staff meeting. Abe Hubert was first on the list. We awarded 4 kids with a membership at Abe Hubert, took pictures of the winners and their family/teachers and then hurried on over to Charles Stones. Charles Stones had four kids but Mrs. Smith had said that they had a few more that they really thought would benefit from having a scholarship. So we added two more! The kids were so taken by surprise. It feels so good when you see good things coming to kids that deserve it.

After that, we left Stones and headed back to do our Joint Staff meeting in which Chad had all kinds of crazy minute to win it games. Of course, after the fun we got down to business, but it wasn't long and we were all getting back to KOP. This time Chad, Keali, Crystal and I took my truck and had to pick up Gilbert Valerio on the way. Chad is telling me where to go, so I am trying to follow his directions to where we pick up Gilbert. I missed the place where Chad wanted me to pull in (probably because it would be illegal to pull into when coming from an opposite direction. Not to mention it was the area in front of the police station!!) So, I had to do a little turn-around into the fire station, which would be the reasoning why we were late 2 minutes to the KOP in Plymell. That's ok, I will take the blame! Plymell had five children to award scholarships to. We finished up there and had to head back into town and drop off Gilbert. On the drive back, we almost got blindsided by a semi-truck (We saw the life flash in front of our eyes!)



To make a long story short, we had two more schools that we awarded kids at. We almost got lost getting to Bernadine Sitts (all me), almost died in a head on collision, but we also made TWENTY SIX kids' day that day. How awesome is that?!? I will never forget the excitement in the kids' eyes as they were called up on stage to receive their award. And seeing them coming into the building afterwards to hang out here at the Y to swim or play ball, or whatever. It's priceless. Thank you to all of our "Keeping Our Promise" donors. You made this happen!

Favorite Sock

Jackie Regan

The other day I noticed one of our members putting a sock on our Christmas sock donation tree. Each year we have people donate pairs of socks and we hang on of the pair on the tree until the season is over and we donate them. I asked the member about donating socks and he said, "Oh is that what you are doing? These are my favorite socks and I lost one so figured I would just hang this one." It literally cracked me up, but was awesome that he wanted to share his sock! (pic of sock tree on public)

Touching Base

Chad Knight

As I was sitting in my office, Karen stopped a member and asked them how are they doing and where have they been? This member was just overly excited that Karen has noticed and that she even said something to him. He kept on telling Karen how much he appreciated that and what it meant to him to know that the staff really cares about our well-being. I preach and preach to the staff to make sure and get this done with our members and build relationships. This was a great example of living our cause!! GREAT JOB Karen!

Great Swim Meet

Keali Shelton

This was my 3rd swim meet that I have hosted and was still a little nervous because I wanted everything to run smoothly. The Ulysses coach came up to me towards the end of the meet and said that this swim meet was the best swim meet he has ever been too. He proceeded to tell me that he has been to a lot of meets as well as lifeguarded them. He said the bull pen was fantastic and everything ran as according to if not better!

Draft Night

Crystal Ibarra

Well where do I begin, tonight is draft night for ASC and I'm all alone! I'm still a rookie and have no clue on what I'm doing. Chad tells us to get our plates and sit down so we can get started. Everyone and their partners hurry and grab a spot. Let me just say NO team like to share tables because they don't want you to hear who they are trying to draft. Well little ol me has to sit in the middle alone. But to my surprise the board president and a board member come to my rescue. Rich Harp and Terry Darden tell me, we will sit here and help you! Made me excited and happy to know I was not alone. They both had some great nominees and Rich kept high fiving me throughout the whole thing saying "We're going to win". Even though my partner couldn't attend I had two great people by my side and made this the best draft night I have ever attended! Thank you both I'm glad you both were there.

HAWK...a Chad moment

Karen Berry

Lately I have made many trips to see the grandbaby. Friday the 20th I walked into daycare with her mom. KU had played that day and won, her daycare teacher said guess what we learned today," what's that on your shirt?" My grandbaby replied "HAWK".

Memories of Y Ball

Jackie Regan

Oh how the time flies! I sat at the scores table today with Bailey Meng, a high schooler. I remember her from our league, where her dad & mom, Matt & Becky were great coaches for us. That was back when I was in charge of Sports and could tell you a player's name, their parent's name and what school they go to. I might not be able to pick them all out of a crowd but I "know them". Bailey told me how much she loved playing Y Ball. How one year in basketball they were playing for the championship vs Chad's team. Her team was undefeated, and she had the flu. They only had five players. So she played. They won. 2-0, with the only points scored by Bailey. I laughed, and text Chad to tell him the story. The memories made in an old gym, a rubber floor, a basketball, a story to tell for a lifetime.

Yesterday

Karen Berry

It was Krystal Richardson's late date and Amanda was having quite a time with a little guy in childwatch. I went in to see if I could help. I sat down with him and looked him in the eye and began to talk. Each word I said he would scream a very shrill scream; but I continued. As I was doing so I thought I have been there, just so frustrated the only thing that could relieve the stress was a scream. The longer I talked the less shrill his screams became, another little guy was watching and he very intentionally got put in time out. Interesting I thought. I ended up asking if he spoke English and his sister said he did "but I can't do anything with him". I made a trip to the fitness center and found Mom. I hope he is having a better day today. "Yesterday all my troubles seemed so far away..."

Bad Day?

Keali Shelton

One of my lifeguards, Yolanda, was having a bad day; it was a rough day at school, parents were being parents of a teenager, and just anything to make things worse. She had to work this day as well and when she came in, she was not in the best of mood to lifeguard crazy kids. When Yolanda got done with her shift, she had water safety classes right after and right before she went in to her second class, she turns to me and says, "Keali, I love my job, I love these kids, and I love that I can make a difference in their lives. When I am having a bad day, I know these kids will make up for it!"
AMAZING!!!

Bob Sperling

Crystal Ibarra

Every other month we have monthly mingles, I'm in charge of having the lunch and learns. The first one I had was with weight loss and Bob Sperling was our speaker. He did amazing. Bob had some health issues last June and was out for quite some time. We kept in touch while he was out. In December he came to the YMCA and asked about what we had to offer. I let him know we had just approved a senior discount. He said "Well I'm ready to get started." Signed him up and he was in that day to workout. He also has a goal to lose 50 pounds. With our great facility I know he can do it!

Appreciative Ambassador

Jackie Regan

Last week Karen nominated Dr. William Clifford as our Ambassador of the Month and we were lucky enough that right after staff meeting he was at the Y. Karen had already written the story and asked me to print it for her so I did so and went to hang it up. Standing right up front was Bill, so I had Crystal get me his prizes and showed him his AOM write-up. The next day I ran into Jean, his wife, and she told me how much Bill appreciated the award and how nice it was. It was great that he enjoyed his recognition and it made me realize once again how great our Y family members are and how much we appreciate each and every one of them!

Go Deacon!

Keali Shelton

Deacon Johann was in the pool swimming and his case worker was cheering him on saying, "you can do it!" "Go Deacon Go!" It was really fun to see!

Motivation

Crystal Ibarra

I was working the Welcome Center and Charles walked in. I said "Good morning Charles" he said "Good morning Crystal." I asked him if he was ready for his spinning class. His reply "YES, that class is amazing makes me wake up every day motivated!" Charles is a great member we have here. Not only is he a member but he volunteers to cover spinning instructors classes if they cannot attend.

Monumental Moments at BOD Meetings

Jackie Regan

Yesterday a board member pulled me aside and told me how nice it was to hear our monumental moment stories at the BOD meetings. He went on to tell me that Janee's presentation on her monumental moment was amazing and she was very well-spoken and the whole board was impressed. Way to go Janee! We are lucky to have her as a membership coordinator.

Our amazing translator

Jackie Regan

I emailed Itzel Rodriguez, our translator for programs the other day and asked her to translate an upcoming program flyer. She had it back to me in about twenty minutes and I told her thanks so much because she is always great about getting stuff back to us in a timely manner. She responded that she would be gone the first three weeks in June so we needed to make sure we got her anything we would need before then. I told her thanks again and I would pass along the message. She responded that she "loves to be a part of our team". I thought that was so great. What an amazing volunteer for the Y, we can't be grateful enough for the support of people in our Y Family!

The Wizard of Oz

Karen Berry

Remember just before the end of the Wizard of Oz and Toto pulls the curtain and there is a little man shouting into the microphone "I am the great and powerful OZ" and Dorothy is so disappointed. Let's reverse this process a bit. Here is a beautiful city running ever so smoothly, "with a clip clip here, and a clip clip there...that's how we laugh the day away in the merry ole land of oz." Our accounting software failed just prior to Easter, the hard drive was full, and would not accept any further information. When I returned from my Easter trip, it was still not working. Let's just say when the curtain was pulled back and there stood Isaac Armstrong I could not have been any merrier in this land of OZ!

Academic Achievement

Crystal Ibarra

As I was working the front desk, Peter Powers walks in and says "Crystal I know I have a membership but would it be okay if I brought in my daughters grades for your program you have on their grades?" With Joy I said of course. We encourage all kids to do an amazing job in school. He has twin daughters who make straight A's in school. Our academic Achievement program is for kids who bring in their report card with A's will receive a free month membership.

Pat Schmidt

Crystal Ibarra

Every month we have Member Appreciation on the 15th. This day New members may join for Free and every 15th member who comes in can spin our wheel for a chance to win one of our prizes! Well this month Pat Schmidt was one of our lucky 15th member. She spun the wheel and won a free basic birthday! She came into my office and asked if she could donate it to a lucky person of our choice!

Jose Arreola

Steven Lynch

The other day I was talking to Jose and it was just small talk about nothing in particular. But he told me what a great place the YMCA was for him and his family. It is great to know that we help make a difference in peoples lives.

Love for Livestrong

Keali Shelton

I had attended the first Livestrong cook out for when the ladies graduated the Livestrong program and I got to talking to one of the participants named Tammy. Tammy started telling some facts about herself and one of them was that she used to run a daycare. We then got on the subject of the Livestrong program and she had told me that she loved this program and wished she didn't live so far away so she could stay at the Y. Tammy had mentioned that she lives in Montezuma but is thinking in moving to Garden City just so she can stay at the YMCA.

Family Visit

Jackie Regan

Over the weekend my brother, his wife and three of their kids came to visit while my niece attended basketball practice here in town. They had a great time learning to play racquetball, swimming and playing polypong. My sister-in-law commented how nice it is we have a facility like this that families can enjoy! It was a blast!

Livestrong testimonials

Steven Lynch

When we finished up our LiveStrong program we had a bbq for all the participants to top it all off. It was a perfect way to end the session with everyone together and just enjoying each other's company. But the greatest part came when they all gave their testimonials from their experience. Some were short and some were long but they were all very powerful and emotional. Which shows that with the right people around any and everybody are strong.

Oops.....PANIC!!!

Crystal Ibarra

Today is graduation night for Livestrong participants, we offered a program for cancer survivors. This was the first group to graduate. I was very excited to get invited to the graduation. The party was a potluck and I decided to make a salad. I went to Dillon's and was buying everything I needed and some gifts for them. I put some papers over the ham I was buying, I went up to pay for everything. But the papers were free so I didn't move them. I loaded up the car and went home excited to start making my food. Well as I got home and started unloading I found my ham in between those papers. I PANICKED!!!! Oh my, what have I done? I hurried and called to let Dillon's know I was sorry and if I could pay for the ham over the phone. They laughed and let me know it was okay, just to pay for it once I went in. I was sweating buckets, I really didn't want the police to show up and take me to jail. Yes I laugh about this now but that day, It was no laughing situation. I showed up that night with my salad and everyone enjoyed. Being there at the graduation being able to celebrate with these loving ladies, made my night. Watching them interact, having their families with them, showed me what an amazing place I work for. Congratulations to our First group to Graduate the Livestrong Program. P.S. I went back that night to pay for my \$5.00 ham. LOL

College Job Fair

Crystal Ibarra

Victor (my husband) was starving and asked me to take him breakfast to the College because he was at the Job Fair and couldn't leave. I wasn't expecting to stay, but Scott was there and started up a conversation with me. He asked me what I did at the YMCA, I asked him if he was a member and he said yes. He and his son love to come to our Noon ball and beat each other. Scott says he may be old but he sure knows how to play and likes that he and his son can have fun here together.

Great Teacher

Keali Shelton

Becky King had just started to work for me and was already amazing people. As Becky was teaching a water safety class, I was told by multiple people that was an absolutely amazing teacher! The parents were so excited to see their kids progression in just a short amount of time.

Ed

Keali Shelton

As I was delivering the 2015 Monumental Moment books to some of our cooperates, I had ran into Ed Lewis, a longtime member of the YMCA, at Hopkins, Hopkins, and Ackerman. I think Ed knew who I was but he knew the monumental moment books and that I work for the YMCA by looking at my shirt. I had told Ed that we really miss seeing him but we hope that he is getting better every day and Ed had said to me that he really misses the Y and wishes he could still come and at least visit. I then told him that where he was at was good and they were helping him.

The value of giving back

Chad Knight

I was speaking with Deanna and telling her thank you for helping with our Campaign and coaching a YMCA team. She then went on to tell me that they were moving back to California and they were going to miss the YMCA. She said the YMCA has played a big role in her and her family and it was easy for her to help and give back to the YMCA. I said well, we are going to miss YMCA members like you.

Darla Daniels

Steven Lynch

Recently I ran into Darla Daniels early in the morning after one of the Body Transformation classes and boy was she pumped up. I also just hired a new instructor for the class. But Darla was telling me how great of an instructor he was and that she gets a great workout with him every time. It is always good to see Darla.

Gloomy Day

Alicia Johnston

It was nearing the end of October and the cold was starting to set in in western Kansas. Today was going to be one of those days where you really just want to be snuggled up watching TV all day. But, instead of laying around, most of us are out getting all of our daily duties done.

Employee of the Month

Crystal Ibarra

Each month we nominate 6 different Membership Winners. Family, Youth, Member, Ambassador, Volunteer, and Employee of the month. June I nominated Jessica Solis. It was my responsibility to let her know she was the winner and give her, her prizes. Well I slacked and didn't tell her. One night she posted on her Snapchat story a picture of the story I wrote about her and put the caption "Say What". The next day Janee told me Jessica said "I wonder what I have to do to become Employee of the Month?" Taygen another staff member told her, "you are Employee of the month this month." That's when she looked over and got really happy. This was my fault for not telling her. Jessica is an amazing employee and we are really lucky to have. Sorry Jessica, You are amazing. KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK!



The Birthday Surprise

Crystal Ibarra

As I was setting out the donuts for our Member Appreciation day, I seen a cake and some flowers on one of our tables. I walked over and saw it said "Happy Birthday Orvileta." After the water aerobics class all of the participants came up to celebrate with her. Her husband did a great job by surprising her. They all sat there and visited while they enjoyed cake.

Change

Jackie Regan

Our 2014 Healthy Living Champion posted the following comment to our Facebook page: "Love the new set up in the cardio room. It looks more wide open, brighter and safer than before. It would have been very easy to just stand pat, but the Garden City YMCA always looks to improve." - Jay Edwards. Thanks Jay, for the kind words and support, it was an adventure getting the machines moved and we relied on volunteers to help- we appreciate hearing that our members like it! (pic on public)

Ed Durr

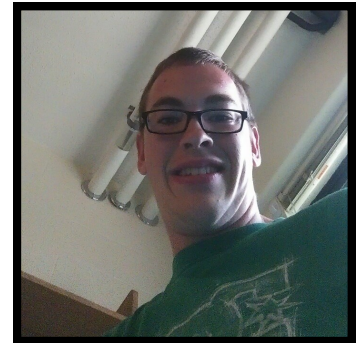
Steven Lynch

The YMCA helped with the Glow Run that was put on by Alpha Zeta and Edward came into the YMCA because he lost his pink shirt from the race and was going to see about getting another one. He was excited about the pink and he told me that he doesn't have a problem wearing pink and is proud to wear it.

Patrick Twiss

Steven Lynch

Patrick was in the weight room the other day so I stopped and talked to him for a minute. It isn't usually for him to be in there he is usually in a few times a week. When we were talking he mentioned that he could tell that he was getting a little stronger, which was great news. Now this is significant because Patrick is confined to a wheel chair. It is a strong message to everyone that even knows he is in the wheel chair he can still make it in to workout, so there is no excuse for anyone. Keep going Patrick!!



Happy Mother's Day

Crystal Ibarra

Each year we do something special for Mother's Day. This year we decided we would have a drawing for Mothers on the Monday after Mother's Day. We had our "Enter for a chance to Win" box out the week before and let moms enter. We even had members entering their moms into the drawing. We had 4 great prizes and four happy Mothers. Samantha Mondragon was one of our winners. She posted this on her FB page and talked about how happy she was because she never wins anything.

Save the Team

Jackie Regan

A coach came in my office and told me about his kindergarten team. They play four on four and he only has five on the roster. One wants to do gymnastics instead. Down to four. One he can't get ahold of. Down for three. Games start tomorrow and we are in a scramble. I tell him to write down his number, I will work on it and get back to him. I buzz Chad and we discuss scenarios...By discuss I mean "we LOUDLY exchanged words with each other". He calls JW, the school where the girls are from and get a phone number for the girl he can't reach. I shoot an email to Danny Chamberlain, a champion for the Y sports programs and ask him for names of girls in that grade that I can recruit. I run an errand. Come back with an email from Danny with a list of about 8 girls and their parent's name and number. I call and call. Disconnect, no answer. Disconnect. No answer. I email him again asking for more. I get a call back and WINNER WINNER it's the girl's mom we couldn't reach. She is good to go! Up to four. They can play. Another call. This one from Danny's list, she says she will bring her daughter. I instruct them to find me Saturday morning and I will get her squared away. They find me the next morning and I see this adorable little girl who looks pretty nervous. I get her a jersey so she is ready to go. Now she is excited. I introduce them to the coach and the team is saved! Danny may have started another little girl on a journey in basketball. He may not think of it like that, but I do. And he saved the day for me, and the team! I can't thank him enough for all he does.

American Warrior

Crystal Ibarra

Angela with American Warrior called me and wanted to setup a Fitness Day at American Warrior. Due to some of the things going on at American Warrior it was rescheduled about 3 times. But the day finally came and it was an amazing time for us as employees but as well as members and prospects. We had about 50 people stop by our booth and have questions. A lot of them had never been to our facility before. We gave them passes to try us out and we have had about 15 use them. American Warrior has 11 Memberships.

Project Graduation

Krystal Richardson

Another year of Project Graduation in the books! This is an event that we work closely with a group of AMAZING ladies from the High School to provide a safe and fun environment for the graduating class each year. They will range from having 100-250 kids attend each year and they give away some AMAZING prizes! Adel Parr is the ring leader for this AWESOME event and she was praising us on how good the facility looked and smelled for her event here. She was very impressed with staff involved from myself, to the lifeguards, to the cleaning crew. Thank you Adel for allowing us to be a part of something so AMAZING for the kiddos who have worked so hard to accomplish something so FANTASTIC!

Compliments from afar

Jackie Regan

I came across this comment on our facebook page and wanted to share: "I miss the Y!! Everyone I ask in the Muskogee area said the Y here closed years ago, there is nothing like the Y here and our family misses it!!!! Keep up the great work in GCKS!!! Know you are a great organization!!!" – Billie Waltz

Personal Training

Steven Lynch

I have been recruiting people that I think would be good personal trainers to take a workshop and come work at the YMCA. One person I asked was Ernie Ornealas and he was glad I asked him. He told me that he would love to become a trainer and would like the opportunity. I wasn't exception that recreation from help so I leads me to believe that he would be a great trainer.

Listening pays off

Karen Berry

Due to computer problems, Dodge's ref checks were not delivered on the 20th. Terry Darden overheard me asking Chad if he knew anyone going that way on Monday. He had a friend named Tracy that works at Lewis Motors and lives in Dodge. I made the connection with Tracy, and he delivered my packet. A person in there lobby overheard us and said I just joined the Y today! Fun times!

Helping those who need help!

Crystal Ibarra

I'm sitting in my office working on AR and Cassandra buzzed me. She said "there's a lady here that would like to talk to you" She explained her situation. As she gets done I let her know we could offer her a 3 month paid temp pass. She was very happy and appreciated that we could help her. This is why I love my job. Being able to help those in need, it really makes a difference.

Steph and Son

Karen Berry

I am working on Sunday because I need to be gone later in the week, my keyboard crashes. Stephanie Davidson and her son were still in gym after a baseball party. Steph is very computer savvy but it was actually her teenage son that fixed the keyboard for me. So grateful for her help.

Doctor's

Keali Shelton

It all started when I went to the doctors office to get my allergy shot. Dr. Koksai had an intern with him from the University of Kansas; Steven. I was wearing a YMCA shirt and my name tag and Dr. Koksai asked, "do you work at the YMCA?" I just looked down at my shirt and name tag and looked back up and Steven had said, "well she is wearing a YMCA shirt and her name tag so I am assuming so." Steven had mention that he is doing a power point presentation on the YMCA and Chad to let people know why working out is good for them and to educate people about the YMCA. "How cool is that!" I had asked if he comes to the Y often and he said that he was on an interpass and normally comes in the morning. Dr. Koksai then started talking about how he loves the intern pass at the YMCA and is always recommending it to all of his interns!

Member of the Month

Keali Shelton

I had nominated Janice Nunn for MOM and she won! I was so excited to tell her! At this time, she had been through a knee replacement surgery and so I knew this would life her up! I had ran into her in the ladies locker room the next day and told her, "You are the member of the month!" She was so thrilled and had asked how she won. I told her that we all loved her enthusiasm of wanting to get back to the Y and her normal routine so quickly! She greatly appreciated me and I gave her her prizes.

Basketball Guru

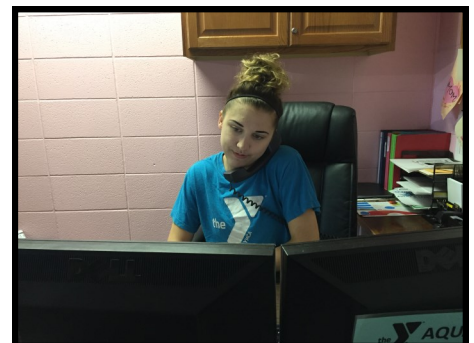
Steven Lynch

Dru is a middle schooler at Horace Good and he comes to the YMCA to play after school. Now likes to play basketball but he is wanting to improve at it. One day he came in and asked me to help him out some, and me loving basketball said I would. So even know I don't work directly with kids anymore I can still help them out when I can and that is great.

The phone call

Chad Knight

I had a conference call with a website company that works with YMCAs across the United States and was playing phone tag. He called and Keali answered the phone with our usual welcome message. He said he LOVED the message and then carried on a nice conversation with Keali. He met with Jackie and I and kept going back to the call with Keali. He was astonished at how well Keali did on the phone and knew everything and said all the right things at the right time. He said if every YMCA across the country had Keali answering the phone, all the YMCAs would be full, busy and have no problems. She was amazing he said. He just kept on going back that they would go to the website and then they could Keali and get ever more excited. Great job Keali!!



Board Meeting, but not boring!

Karen Berry

It is the final meeting of the year. We start on time and end early. A very nostalgic meeting. Some having a hard time letting go, some looking forward to the future. New blood mixed with old blood and big strong men brought to tears by little children....the Y so much more!

Catching Up

Karen Berry

Today I showed up at the original scheduled time for Paula Knoll's funeral, needless to say I missed the memo that after Eleanor passed, it was rescheduled. I was fortunate though to be able to visit with their family members. The swimming classes and the Y will surely miss these ladies.

A great class

Steven Lynch

The other morning I have in to do my daily workout before work when I ran into a couple of people who were doing 5:30 am transformation class. They just got done with class not too much earlier but they were just going on about how good class was. One thing that they liked was that they loved the new instructor and like all the different activities that they do in the morning. I just thought that it was great that they enjoyed class that much.

Great Game

Keali Shelton

I love to coach and I love to teach! I coached 5th and 6th grade volleyball this year and was super nervous. I knew the games would be more intense and parents are even more intense. I had my first game and when I coach, I am also teaching. When I took a water safety class to teach swim lessons, one of many things that were taught to me stuck out the most was when we give feedback, we always need to give something positive as well. I take that teaching style and throw it in with my coaching. After my first game, I had a grandparent of one of my girls come up to me and say, "out of all the years I have seen coaching and games, I have never seen what you do. I think it is amazing that you give the girls criticism but then you back it up with something positive!"

Through the Years

Krystal Richardson

I will take any chance I can get to brag on my husband Jeremy, some may know him and some may not! He has done some AMAZING things with 5th and 6th grade boys as a volunteer coach for the past eight years. He continues to coach some of these boys as they have grown and it is music to my ears when I hear them say "Hey coach!" wherever we may be seen. He recently had one of his past kiddos reach out to him while he was at the Y asking for help on all aspects of basketball. They proceeded to set up days and times that would work and began to practice in the gym. I LOVE that we provide so many volunteer opportunities for youth and adults and that we can make an impact in their lives. Emilio has since become a member at the Y, improved his game and continues to play! He has also mentioned being able to coach a team of his own one day so he can pass on his knowledge.

Jay is the Man!

Chad Knight

Jay never seems to amaze me. First he lost all of his weight and has maintained it. Secondly, he told me about his Minor League ballpark experience and that was pretty amazing. Next, gave me a nice note with a donation from the ARC Banquet. Next, he gave me a nice note in my box about our Saucony grant for our running club we wanted to start. The note said "I got this release from Saucony awhile back but I didn't get around to congratulating you until now, Way to go!" He signed it Jay Edwards and underneath it, he wrote "Team Saucony". I then sent him an email telling him thank s and Steven was looking for an instructor for this program and I told him to ask Jay and he said YES. How great is that? THANKS JAY!!!

Free Gift Card

Steven Lynch

This past weekend we had our last day for the corporate cup with the chilli cook off and 2 mile run. Sean from Western motors approached me and asked if he could take a video for their Friday Video that they do each week and give away a gift card. It was a great idea and so he video taped parts of the run and gave the gift card away to the race winner. It was a great idea and ending to our corporate cup.

Once a Warrior, Always a Warrior

Jackie Regan

I saw on Facebook where a parent for one of the boys in our tackle football league posted that her son had gotten hurt and couldn't play. His head coach, Andrew Gomez who is a great volunteer for the Y commented back that he would always be part of their team, "the warriors". I thought it was great of Andrew to reassure him he was still a part of the team! (pic on public)

What a Blast

Crystal Ibarra

This year during corporate cup, We had an event that was glow in the dark at the golf course. I hadn't ever really played golf before but I decided to try it. Oh boy, was this fun. Keali, CJ, Jason and I were on the YMCA's team. We had a blast. I must say CJ and I did a great job on team work. We took 2nd.



For the LOVE of the game

Chad Knight

During one of the tackle football games, I stopped by the field to check on things and I noticed Curtis leaving the field and talking with Robert as I pulled in. Curtis left and Robert told me he was upset. I said upset with "what". Robert said he didn't know. Later that day, Curtis called me and was upset by how Robert was treating him. He explained some things to me and told me that "Chad, I would do anything for the YMCA football league. I love it. I love helping train new officials. I love the fact you got me started in this officiating and I am trying to pass it on. I just want to feel appreciated for everything I do and I don't need to do this. I choose and want to do this to help the YMCA out." I told Curtis I appreciate everything you have done and I will visit with Robert and get this resolved. He said, "don't worry about it, I will be back next week to help because I can't be away." I said okay, that is great but we still must get to the bottom of this!

Stepping Up

Keali Shelton

This year for the fall and winter season of Swim Team, we partnered up with Holcomb. As the swim meet roles around, I needed some volunteers to fill in what my old volunteers use to do. One in particular was my head timer. A former teacher of mine but swam with Holcomb stepped up and helped me out! A head timer is someone who, if there are not enough timers, to find other people to help. Stan Kennedy was great and found timers in 5 minutes! I couldn't thank him enough!

I Will Miss You

Karen Berry

Taygen Morrison told me the other day she is leaving our front desk to work for PaPa John's Pizza as a night manager. I spent several minutes going back and forth saying "I am so happy for you" and "Dang, you can't leave". I am happy for Taygen as she will make more money before heading off for college; but oh my I will miss her. She always had a story about her music, plays and science classes. I remember her "don't try this at home experiment" starting her hand on fire and her singing lines from some musical. Friday I got a beautiful thank you note from her, but it is I who should be thanking her. What a precious gift to get to know her.



Thank You to our Members for 51 Years!

**We do not remember the days . . .
We remember the Moments that make our days!**